

The Status Report

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Charles F. Hurley Building, 19 Staniford St., 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02114
Web: www.mass.gov/women Phone: 617-626-6520 E-Mail: mcsww@state.ma.us



287 Unsung Heroines of 2008 Honored at State House on May 14th

A capacity crowd of over 600 gathered at the Massachusetts State House to celebrate the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women's 287 Community Unsung Heroines of Massachusetts on May 14.

The honorees came from every corner of the Commonwealth to be recognized for their outstanding, selfless contributions to their organizations and communities in a ceremony that included Attorney General Martha Coakley, Senate President Therese Murray, Speaker of the House Salvatore DiMasi, Caucus of Women Legislators' Co-Chair Senator Susan Fargo and Channel 5's Liz Brunner as Mistress of Ceremonies.

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*Attorney General Martha Coakley
addresses the capacity crowd in
Gardner Auditorium on May 14th.*



Women and Education Focus of MCSW Public Hearing on June 24th

The MCSW will host a public hearing focused on women and education on June 24th at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.. The hearing is being held in collaboration with the American Council on Education Office of Women in Higher Education and the Massachusetts Network of Women in Higher Education.

The MCSW invites all who are involved with women and education to participate. The Commission seeks to be informed of the barriers that exist in regards to education and also the challenges and unique programs and initiatives aimed at remedying those problems. The Commission hopes to be informed of what resources and supports women need to access higher education.

The hearing will be held in Room 101 of Stepanian Hall at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences located at 179 Longwood Avenue in Boston.

Written and oral testimony will be accepted and participation is free and open to the public. Testimony should be limited to three to five minutes in length and should include recommendations for the Commission. Those interested in testifying are encouraged to register by e-mailing the Commission at mcsww@state.ma.us. Directions to Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences can be found at www.mcphs.edu.

In keeping with its mandate to study and report on the status of women in Massachusetts, the MCSW holds statewide public hearings to hear the concerns of women and those organizations that advocate for them. The Commission utilizes the public hearing testimony to shape and influence its work.

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Executive Director's Corner



Women, Wages and Work Policy Conference June 9

This Monday, June 9, nearly a year of planning will culminate in the *Women, Wages & Work Policy Conference* at UMASS Boston. Spearheaded by the college's Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy, the conference has developed through the work of a steering committee comprised of representatives of organizations that care passionately about women's wage equality, their life long economic self sufficiency and family friendly workplace practices. All are united in their desire to make this opportunity available to the women of the Commonwealth so that they can be better informed and better equipped to advocate for themselves and their families to get what they need and want.

We are eagerly looking forward to hearing, learning and being inspired to action from some of the leading authorities on these issues, including U.S. Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Lilly Ledbetter, Plaintiff in the landmark US Supreme Court Case, former Lt. Governor of Massachusetts Evelyn Murphy, Teresa Heinz Kerry, philanthropist & advocate for Women's Retirement Security our state legislative champions, and many other women who are working every day to drive change.

Discussions and presentations will include pending federal and state legislative solutions, how to make the workplace work for you, closing the wage gap; The WAGE Project, retirement planning, and training on how to become an effective advocate.

Our hope is that women will leave with their eyes and minds opened and with the information and tools they need to join in the fight for change. Surely in the year 2008, women should be far further along in closing the 23 cent wage gap that divides what they typically make compared with their male counterparts. We hope women young and old and everywhere in between will get MAD, and say, "We are not going to take it anymore.....WE WANT OUR MILLION DOLLARS!" (It is estimated that over the course of a woman's lifetime, depending on educational achievement, she will earn between \$700,000 to \$2 million less than a man doing similar work.)

It is the collective power of women's voices and actions that will drive true change. If you haven't already registered, there is still time.....go to <http://www.mccormack.umb.edu/centers/cwppp/womenwages&work.php>. We look forward to seeing you.

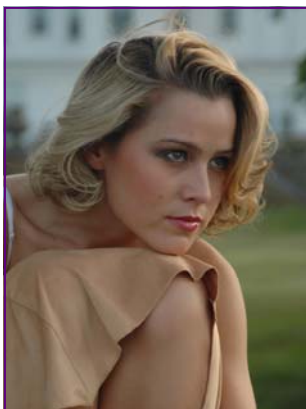
Women & Education Public Hearing June 24

We know that education is the pipeline to women's earning power, economic self sufficiency and ability to care for themselves and their families. Yet there are 31,400 women in Massachusetts who have not received any formal schooling. Over 15 percent of women in Massachusetts do not have a high school diploma. And not enough women are continuing their education after high school.

The MCSW wishes to examine the issues that are significant to women and education – the challenges and barriers, in addition to those unique and innovative programs that have been launched to improve readiness, access, financing and balancing it all. We hope to hear from students, educators, policy makers and advocates, about issues, as well as solutions. If you have pertinent information to share, please plan to join us at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, 179 Longwood Avenue, Boston from 3:30-5:30. If you would like to present verbal or written testimony, please contact Jill Ashton, Outreach Coordinator, at 617-626-6525.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Linda Brantley'.

Commissioner Corner: Spotlight on Commissioner Erika Ebbel



In 2006, the Governor's Office nominated Erika Ebbel to serve as a Commissioner for the MA Commission on the Status of Women. She is currently attending Boston University Medical School in the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences as a Ph.D. candidate in Analytical Biochemistry and plans to obtain an MD. She is a 2004 graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology majoring in Chemistry and minoring in music.

Commissioner Ebbel became interested in math and science at an early age. When she was 12 she discovered isolating natural antiviral products from an herb. Her project led to her involvement with many multinational companies and institutions. She was the recipient of a number of statewide, national and international science awards.

She is the founder of WhizKids Foundation, Inc., (www.whizkidsfoundation.org) a 501(c)3 nonprofit whose mission is to promote student interest in mathematics and the sciences. Since its inception in 2002, WhizKids has been working towards setting up science-oriented programs across the country. She was selected by L'Oreal Paris as a 2007 Woman of Worth for her work with WhizKids and was featured on Lifetime TV.

She is a contributing editor and columnist for Wellness Options Magazine, a health/science magazine, available in the US, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia.

In 2004, Ebbel was Miss Massachusetts in the Miss America Scholarship program. Throughout the last four years, she has been invited to speak at numerous events, encouraging young girls to pursue careers in math and science and engineering.

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2008 Unsung Heroines of Massachusetts

This year's fifth annual Unsung Heroine event featured women who were carefully selected from nearly 600 nominations to be honored for making a difference in the lives of others.

"Our Unsung Heroines are women who don't make the news, but make the difference in their communities, businesses, or volunteer endeavors. They are the women who quietly, without fanfare or recognition and usually behind the scenes, use their time, talent, spirit and enthusiasm to enrich the lives of others," said Linda Brantley, MCSW Executive Director. "We are awed by the fabulous work women across the Commonwealth are doing and thankful to the many nominators who brought these incredible women to our attention."

"Women comprise 52 percent of the state's population and we wanted to make sure that their contributions were recognized, as well as showcase models that can be replicated elsewhere. Our heroines are making an amazing impact and well deserve this recognition," said Marianne Fleckner of Westford, Chair of the MCSW.

The event included the above speakers, recognition of each honoree by town, a group photo and a "Just Desserts" reception, featuring donations from esteemed female pastry chefs.

This event was made possible through the support of the Personal Care Products Council, Bank of America, Verizon, the New England Patriots Charitable Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Beverly Hospital, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, and the Teresa & H. John Heinz III Charitable Fund of the Heinz Family Foundation.

For more photos of the day's events please see page 7.



MCSW on Beacon Hill

As a member of the Paid Sick Coalition, the MCSW has been supporting Senate Bill 1073: An Act Establishing Paid Sick Days. The bill is currently being reviewed by the Senate Ethics and Rules Committee. If passed, it would ensure employees have access to seven paid sick days in order to tend to their health and well-being and to care for that of their children and immediate family members as well. In addition, under the act on paid sick days, victims of domestic violence would have the time to take care of their physical and mental health.

Everyone should have the opportunity to seek medical care without the fear of losing their job or earned wages. Parents ought to be afforded the time to care for their children, and for children, the time to care for elderly or ill parents.

The bill was reported favorably by the committee on Labor and Workforce Development. Please share your support by contacting your Senator and ask that the bill be brought to the full Senate for a vote. Contact information can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/legis/memmenus.htm>. Included below is a draft of a letter to for your use.

Dear Senator,

I am writing to you to ask for your support of Senate bill 1073: An Act Establishing Paid sick days. The act would benefit Massachusetts workers, employers, and the public.

The bill provides for seven paid sick days which allow employees to take care of their personal health and that of immediate family members as well as time for victims of domestic violence to tend to their mental and physical health. Workers should not have to choose between their health and a day of work. Surprisingly, only 15% of service-sector workers have any paid sick days. These are the workers who serve food, provide childcare and give home healthcare. Sick employees forced to work because they are not afforded a single paid sick day risk their own long term health as well as that of fellow coworkers and the public! According to Dr. Rajiv Bhaite of the San Francisco Department of Public Health, 90% of food-borne illness can be traced back to a sick employee. In addition, employees able to tend to their medical needs would be able to be more productive than those who were never given the time to regain their health.

In the interest of MA workers, families, and the health of the general public, I urge your support of S 1073. Please bring the Paid Sick Days bill to a vote by the full Senate as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,
[Your name]

Congratulations to Early Education for All



The MCSW commends "Early Education for All" on their successful campaign for a universal pre-kindergarten program (UPK) in Massachusetts.

The House of Representatives voted unanimously on May 28th for *An Act Relative to Early Education and Care* that formerly established a UPK program in the Commonwealth. The Act awaits the Senate's approval and the signature of Governor Deval Patrick.

Congratulations on their achievement and whole-hearted dedication!

U.S. Department of Labor Offers Free Financial Education



Flex-Options For Women in the Workplace

The goal of the Flex-Options for Women project is to help businesses and non profit community organizations create or enhance workplace flexibility policies and programs for their workforces. The program brings together businesses and nonprofit organizations who volunteer to mentor those interested in developing flexible workplace policies and programs. When employers redesign work and implement flexible work options, employees are better able to manage work and life responsibilities. Businesses and nonprofits realize positive bottom line impacts as well. The Women's Bureau holds teleconferences focusing on important flexible work arrangement issues such as trends in workplace flexibility, challenges to flexible work arrangements, job sharing, legal issues, and best practices. The program features bi-monthly conference calls. The next call is scheduled for June 17th and will address the topic of "Generation X and Y Workers - What They Want and Expect in Workplace Flexibility". Additional information is available on the Flex-Options for Women Web site at www.we-inc.org.

For more information please contact Jacqueline Cooke at cooke.jacqueline@dol.gov, Region I (Boston) or 617-565-1988 and/or Angela M. Rizzolo at rizzolo.angela@dol.gov (Boston) or 617-565-1988.

Wi\$e Up, a Financial Management Tool

Wi\$e Up is a financial education demonstration project targeted to Generation X and Y women. Ages 17-47. The centerpiece of the program is an eight-module curriculum offered online, as well as in a classroom setting, in educational institutions, community based and other organizations. In the online program, the curriculum is complemented by an "Ask the Experts" feature, which permits participants to send questions by e-mail to volunteers with financial expertise. Another feature available to participants in both the online and classroom-based versions is a series of bi-monthly one-hour teleconference calls with featured speakers and a question and answer session. Participants and experts (mentors) are recruited by local organizations who partner with the Women's Bureau. For further details please visit the Wi\$e Up Web site at www.wiseupwomen.org.

Individuals may sign up by contacting Jacqueline Cooke at cooke.jacqueline@dol.gov, Region I (Boston) or 617-565-1988 and/or Angela M. Rizzolo at rizzolo.angela@dol.gov (Boston) or 617-565-1988.

Volunteer Opportunity at Women, Wages & Work Conference

Be part of a day-long event with exciting speakers and strategy sessions to close the wage gap; advocate for yourself in the workplace; advocate for family friendly benefits, retirement security, and work/life balance; and examine how to get women what they need in child care and job training.

About 20 individuals are needed to help the Women, Wages & Work Conference run smoothly on Monday, June 9th. For details about the conference, visit the conference website at www.mccormack.umb.edu/womenwages&work.

Duties include:

- Serving as escorts for keynote speakers & facilitators (see website for list)
- Assisting staff at registration table, directing press, guests to ballroom for speeches/panels
- Assuring that everyone entering the ballroom has registered and directing those who have not back to the registration table.
- Directing attendees to the locations of the afternoon breakout sessions
- Providing assistance to exhibitors/sponsoring organizations in the Exhibitor Hall
- Other duties as determined

Benefits of volunteering:

- Free admission to the morning speeches & panels
- Opportunity to connect with interesting women, policymakers
- Sense of contributing to an important initiative aimed at decreasing the gender wage gap and improving the conditions of women at work

To volunteer please visit <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/survey.zgi?p=WEB227V2K3WT2A>. If you need more information before deciding, email Paige.Ransford@umb.edu about your interest. Include "Volunteer" in the subject line.

Take Action. Get Educated. Get Involved.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in the movement to advance women in the Commonwealth you can start by attending any one of the number of events and meetings taking place across the state in the coming weeks.

Monday, June 9 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.): Women, Wages and Work Policy Conference

Location: UMASS Boston Campus Center Ballroom (Boston)

Details: Join us for a day of dynamic speakers and interactive strategy sessions to reduce the wage gap between women and men. Speakers scheduled to appear are: Lilly Ledbetter, plaintiff in Supreme Court gender wage discrimination case; Evelyn Murphy, author of *Getting Even: Why Women Don't Get Paid as Much as Men and What to Do About It*; Rocio Saenz, President of SEIU Local 615; Ann Bookman, Executive Director of MIT Workplace Center; and Ellen Bruce, Director of the Pension Action Center at UMASS Boston. For more information on the conference, please visit: <http://www.mccormack.umb.edu/womenwages&work>.

Tuesday, June 17 (8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.): Free Seminar on Flexibility in the Workplace

Location: 3 Center Plaza - Government Center (Boston)

Details: A hands-on seminar designed for organizations with 2 or more employees hosted by the Hachette Book Group USA. The Seminar will feature a presentation and hands-on assistance to enhance flexibility at your workplace while ensuring business success. The presenter is Karen Noble, Senior Consultant of WFD Consulting and a nationally recognized flexibility expert. Ms. Noble has worked with both large companies such as IBM and General Electric and small groups and teams to effectively implement flexibility. If you are an employer with two or more employees who wants to have an action-oriented experience regarding how flexibility can be successfully used in your organization, please come to this educational session. The Seminar will also provide an opportunity to exchange experience with colleagues. To register, please contact Angela Rizzolo at 617-565-1986 or rizzolo.angela@dol.gov.

Tuesday, June 24 (3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.): Women and Education Public Hearing

Location: MA College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences - Stepanian Hall Room 101 (179 Longwood Avenue - Boston)

Details: See article on Page One for more details.

Do you have an event you would like to see on this list in an upcoming issue of The Status Report? E-mail the details to Program Coordinator Kim Sebastiao at Kimberly.Sebastiao@state.ma.us and we will do our best to include your event in our next issue.

Special Thanks to Unsung Heroines Sponsors!

We would not be able to honor the wonderful Unsung Heroines of Massachusetts at the State House on May 14th without the support of the following organizations.

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Committed to Safety,
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Hospital

\$5,000

Bank of America



\$2,500

THE NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

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2008 Unsung Heroines of Massachusetts

Photos Courtesy of Jayna LaVerde of Lynwood Studio.



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Jill Ashton, Outreach Coordinator
Kim Sebastiao, Program Coordinator
Darlene Kelter, Administrative Assistant

Commission Interns

Meghan Condry, *Providence College*
Katherine Gittleson, *UMASS-Lowell Alumna*
Mary Powell, *UMASS-Dartmouth*



19 Staniford St., 6th FL
Boston, MA 02114

Phone:

617.626.6520

Fax:

617.626.6530

E-Mail:

mcsw@state.ma.us

Web site:

www.mass.gov/women

**Do you have questions or comments about this
newsletter? If so, please contact**

MCSW@state.ma.us